

Trump has no cards - Max with Judge Napolitano

Max joins Judge Andrew Napolitano's Judging Freedom to discuss the failure of Trump's Project Freedom and more

#Speaker 1

Undeclared wars are commonplace.

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Tragically, our government engages in preemptive war, otherwise known as aggression, with no complaints from the American people. Sadly, we have become accustomed to living with the illegitimate use of force by the government. To develop a truly free society, the issue of initiating force must be understood and rejected.

#Judge Napolitano

What if sometimes, to love your country, you had to alter or abolish the government? What if Jefferson was right? What if that government is best which governs least? What if it is dangerous to be right when the government is wrong? What if it is better to perish fighting for freedom than to live as a slave? What if freedom's greatest hour of danger is now?

#Judge Napolitano

Hi everyone, Judge Andrew Napolitano here for Judging Freedom. Today is Thursday, May 7th, 2026. Max Blumenthal is with us now. Max, I want to start with President Trump in the Oval Office yesterday with eight- and nine-year-old schoolchildren. And my friends, this is a little difficult to watch, but Max will analyze it for us. Here's the president talking violence and trash to children.

#Donald Trump

They don't have any guns. So you can have 200,000 people protesting and have five or six sick people with guns. And when they start shooting them right between the eyes, and you see a guy fall and another one fall, and you have no guns, all of a sudden a woman drops dead with a bullet right there, always right there. Then another woman drops. And then the word starts to spread. And then there's panic. And then they ran. And we can't let Iran have a nuclear weapon. You might be too young for this. I don't know if I want— they probably know. They probably know better than most

people. But you can't let a bunch of lunatics have a nuclear weapon. President Trump, there's never been a man that deserves a Nobel.

He ended eight wars, including India-Pakistan, which would have been a nuclear war. Eight of them. And I called everybody in, Gary, and I said, you know what? We just broke every record. And now we're going to take a hit because we have to make a journey down to Iran to take the nuclear weapon. They would have had a nuclear weapon within two weeks. Remember, we sent that beautiful B-2 bomber in and we blew up their nuclear potential. It was obliterated, for those that are not aware. We would have had an Iran with a nuclear weapon, and maybe we wouldn't all be here right now. And thank you very much. And Bryson, thank you very much. You really took this and brought it to a level. It's true. Biden and President Obama decided that it wasn't important, and they're so wrong.

#Speaker 1

Thank you very much, everybody.

#Judge Napolitano

Can he control himself?

#Max

Well, there's so much there. He says that four to five sick people with sniper rifles killed 40,000 protesters. So he kind of explodes the lie of 30,000 to 40,000 protesters killed on January 8th and 9th. And at the same time, Trump, in a previous disclosure—an unintentional disclosure—said that the U.S. has armed the Kurds and that they were involved in these so-called protests, which were actually regime change riots aimed at toppling the government of Iran. And here we are, after 40 days of warfare imposed on Iran, and Trump has failed to achieve any military objectives.

Leading up to February 28th, when Trump went in with Israel to attempt to decapitate the Iranian government and its entire leadership, Trump was convinced after a Situation Room meeting with Netanyahu, where the Israeli prime minister sat at the head of the table and Trump sat to the side, that these decapitation strikes would lead to a capitulation of the Islamic Republic and the protests returning to the streets and overwhelming the government and the IRGC and taking control. After all of that, he has failed to achieve any military or political objectives stated at the outset. And before February 28th, Trump had failed to offer any explanation to the American public for why this needed to take place. In the past, we'd have George W. Bush telling us about—we need to stop WMDs, we found yellowcake there.

They would deploy a series of lies about mushroom clouds, looming mushroom clouds. Now there's nothing. So now, after all of these failures—40 days and then a ceasefire, and then the U.S.

extending the ceasefire unilaterally after Iranian negotiators simply failed to turn up in Islamabad because they understand that these negotiations are cover for more warfare and are essentially a joke—Donald Trump is making the case to random school kids that Iran will kill them in two weeks and that we're facing a new Cuban Missile Crisis. That's his case to the American public, trying to scare random school kids, and it's not working. The public is completely done with this war. Donald Trump is unable to continue the war, and at the same time, he's unable to move away from the war for various reasons. And so that helps set the backdrop, I think, for the massive failure of Project Freedom.

#Judge Napolitano

Oh, but Max, it's two different wars. They changed the name from Epic Fury to Project Freedom. That restarts the clock. Let's see—Epic Fury lasted six weeks. Project Freedom, did it even last six hours?

#Max

Epic Fury began as Epstein Fury and ended as Epic Fail. It was a complete failure. The Washington Post is now reporting what we all knew, which is that Iran has decimated U.S. military bases across the region. The Washington Post reports, as those of us who were, for example, following this more closely, that around 230 military assets, sites, bunkers, billion-dollar radar systems were destroyed, most of them in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, at the key bases. Al Udeid Air Base has also lost its major radar systems. The Washington Post just reported today, citing a CIA source, that Iran still has 75% of its ballistic missile stocks and its capacity to fire them. I suspect that's an underestimate. And so returning to war would mean the further destruction of U.S. bases.

It would create an even larger wedge between the U.S. and the Gulf vassal states that it depends on and which were the linchpin of the so-called Abraham Accords, the Epstein Accords. We now know that Saudi Arabia and Kuwait both refused to provide the U.S. with overflight access or basing rights or basing access when Trump launched Project Freedom. That's a signal of how badly Epic Fury was an epic fail. Project Freedom is launched, the U.S. announces that it's going to guide boats through the Strait of Hormuz. No shipping companies agree. No insurers will abide by this policy. It's absurd on its face. The U.S. claims, or Trump claims, that the U.S. Navy will provide tankers with the locations of Iranian mines, even though Iran has lost the location of many of its own mines.

No mention of the likelihood of drones or missiles incoming on those ships. A South Korean tanker was hit, and that was pretty much the end of Project Freedom. The U.S. attempted to send some destroyers or some other ships through, and they faced warning shots from Iran. Trump declares that Iran's Navy is totally obliterated, that Iran's military is obliterated, and that, even more crucially, his naval blockade of Iranian ports has utterly decimated Iran's economy. And the CIA comes out

today, via the Washington Post, saying that Iran can hold on for at least three to four months under U.S. naval siege as the global economy spirals and fertilizer is failing to arrive to U.S. farmers in the heartland, in Trump's base.

Donald Trump, during a spree of posting AI slop throughout the night, published a photograph—an AI photo—of himself holding five or, I think, six Uno cards, which actually means he's losing according to the rules of Uno, and declared he has all the cards. He has absolutely no cards to play because he's clearly afraid to go back to war and see the decimation of U.S. bases, the unraveling of the U.S. Gulf vassal states, which are literally facing destabilization and economic collapse. Dubai is at 10% occupancy of its hotels, yet he can't not go to war because of pressure from the Israelis and his own inability to simply accept failure. And so he's stuck in this frozen policy, which is devastating the global economy. So Trump says he has all the cards. He actually has no cards. And for someone who spent a lifetime in the sleazy culture of casinos—Trump Casino—he should know when to fold 'em. He doesn't.

#Judge Napolitano

Are people finally starting to ask questions? Why can Israel have nuclear weapons and Iran can't?

#Max

Thirty-nine House Democrats have now asked that question. This is a real turning point—just the fact that anyone has dared put this forward. Let me pull up this letter. This is a letter signed mostly by the Progressive Caucus of the Democrats. The most prominent one would be Joaquin Castro; it's under his name. And then you'll see all the familiar names of the more progressive Democrats. And it does raise questions about why something like 150 Democrats in the House won't sign this letter, because it seems kind of like a no-brainer.

But the letter declares that the U.S. should end its policy of recognizing Israel's strategic ambiguity about its nuclear program at the Dimona Negev nuclear facility, which is completely unregulated and, thanks to U.S. diplomatic cover, can exist without IAEA inspections. And the reason is the U.S. is now waging a war side by side with Israel against Iran in order to supposedly prevent Iran from getting nuclear weapons. The reason Iran has a nuclear program with breakout capacity is because it has faced regime change warfare from Israel, a secret or ambiguous nuclear power. So this letter makes perfect sense.

It's time for the U.S. to acknowledge that it's waging war with a fellow nuclear power, that the U.K. has been involved in this war, and it is also a nuclear power. And there's a certain irony here, which is that the U.S. actually helped Iran develop its nuclear program through Eisenhower's Atoms for Peace. Iran's nuclear program didn't begin under the Islamic Republic; it began under Shah

Mohammad Reza Pahlavi. I actually visited the nuclear reactor in Tehran that Pahlavi developed for civilian purposes, and now it's a source of concern. Israel at the time was actually helping train Iranian nuclear physicists and scientists.

So now it's a source of concern because Israel's worried it would be a deterrent against a regime change war. So this letter rips the cover off Israel's hypocrisy. It mentions Mordecai Vanunu, who, other than Julian Assange and a few other figures, is one of the bravest whistleblowers in history. He was a technician with special security clearance at the Negev nuclear facility in the 1970s, who exposed to the international media that Israel had a secret nuclear program that the United States and France had helped develop. Israel then hunted Vanunu, has hunted him, and tortured him for his entire life since then.

The Mossad captured him after drugging him, I think deploying a honey trap, brought him back to Israel, convicted him, sentenced him to 20 years or a lifetime in prison, where he was held in solitary confinement for 11 years. I actually met with his brother years ago when I was in Israel, and his brother told me that the solitary confinement had devastated Vanunu's mental state. He was basically being murdered in real time by Israel through solitary confinement and torture as the price of exposing this program. Well, now there's no hiding it anymore. It's under official congressional letterhead. One incident that I wish Joaquin Castro and the House Democrats had mentioned is the NUMEC scandal, in which nuclear material was stolen.

Highly enriched uranium was stolen from the NUMEC plant, which is the Nuclear Materials and Equipment Corporation in Apollo, Pennsylvania, through an operation run by Rafi Eitan, who was one of the leaders of the Mossad at the time, a key figure in stealing nuclear secrets from the U.S. in many arenas. And this entire incident was covered up by James Jesus Angleton, who was a double agent for the CIA and Mossad and was the head of the CIA's Israel account while he simultaneously ran its counterintelligence operations. It's time to understand how Israel obtained its nuclear weapons capacity, not only through secret cooperation with the U.S. and diplomatic cover from the U.S., but actually by stealing America's nuclear secrets, also in stealing data from the Los Alamos facility.

This is what Americans need to know: that Israel has the delivery mechanism that Iran doesn't have—the Jericho 2 and 3 missiles. These are intercontinental ballistic missiles with which Israel can enact the Samson option and strike targets in Western Europe, and even in the United States if it chooses to do so. Israel has used nuclear blackmail against the United States in the 1973 war, when it was facing what it thought was existential doom after Egyptian forces were able to cross the Sinai Peninsula and devastate Israeli tank columns, and Syria was advancing. There was pressure on Nixon and Kissinger to authorize a massive shipment of weapons.

And according to Jonathan Pollard, the Israeli spy who penetrated U.S. naval intelligence is now an Israeli politician and friends with the U.S. ambassador, Mike Huckabee. According to an interview with Jonathan Pollard recently, Israeli intelligence took the U.S. ambassador to an airfield in the

Negev Desert, presented them with an Israeli jet with a nuclear weapon strapped to it, and said, "We are going to deploy a nuclear weapon on Egypt unless you authorize this shipment of weapons." So nuclear blackmail, nuclear theft, and the torture of whistleblowers is the source of Israel's nuclear weapons program. And it's now out in the open, and it's time for the U.S. public to pressure their lawmakers to add their names to this letter.

#Judge Napolitano

What provoked these 33 or 39—I forget what the number was—Democrats to write this?

#Max

I think just disgust with the overall policy and the space they now have—the political latitude they now have—to say things that were once forbidden previously, in Congress and in public, in U.S. life, about Israel and this dastardly special relationship in which the U.S. is protecting a secret nuclear power while going to war to prevent another country from ever getting a nuclear weapon when it does not even have a weapons program. The Democratic Party base is now solidly opposed to the special relationship with Israel, to the point where Rahm Emanuel, someone who lost his finger in a kitchen accident while involved in a junior IDF program one summer, who himself and his talent agent brother are fully dedicated to basically salvaging the relationship with Israel, now have to offer this insidious plan to have Israel pay for its own weapons in order to protect the overall relationship.

The Democratic Party base's support for Israel, like that of Democratic voters, is in single digits. Most Democrats actually now support Palestine over Israel, according to pollsters. So... and the mask is completely off with Trump waging this war alongside Israel. As Pete Hegseth said, all Iranians are going to see are the stars and stripes and the Star of David in the sky. So they can say this now without any consequence. And in fact, their voters will reward them. The reason that so many Democrats didn't sign this is because they're the ones who answer to the donor class.

#Judge Napolitano

I wonder if these Democrats are aware of—I'm segueing here, Max—people in the White House making money off insider trading based on Trump's manipulations of the market.

#Max

Yes. And this goes back to our discussion of Project Freedom, which lasted about 24 hours. It was a complete failure. But for Trump and his cronies, Trump Incorporated, it was a giant success because, as Trump wrapped up Project Freedom, suddenly something like seven traders placed massive shorts on oil. They were betting on the price of oil going down. Not seven, but a series of traders. Seven hours after the oil shorts came in, Axios reported that the U.S. and Iran were close to a deal and that they were reviewing a two-page memorandum from the U.S., which I could have

told you right out of the gate was a complete lie. And I would know it was a complete lie because of who was on that byline.

That article was authored by Barak Ravid, who is Axios' main reporter on Israel-Palestine affairs and the Middle East, and is based in Washington but is a veteran of Israel's Unit 8200 intelligence unit, a former Israeli reservist, and the main stenographer and water carrier for Jared Kushner, Steve Witkoff, and Donald Trump in the last 19 days. Barak Ravid has put forward five false stories claiming the U.S. and Iran were close to a deal or that the conflict was winding down. And each time, bets would come in or oil shorts to generate insider trading profits for Trump cronies. There appears to be coordination here between Ravid and his employers at Axios and the Trump administration to make money for Trump Incorporated off this war while lying to the public. Every time those stories come out, Iranian officials shoot them down, as they did this time.

Mohammad Ghalibaf, the Iranian parliamentary speaker, called Axios "Fosios," like "Falsios." On two occasions, Ravid has planted stories or published planted stories to make the case for war with Iran. So you're looking at a corruption ring in which at least \$2.8 billion of insider trading profits have been generated through the planting of false stories with Barak Ravid and other sources, in order to manipulate markets while Trump loses the war and devastates the global economy and massively harms the economic future of everyday Americans who have to pay for higher fuel prices, especially the working poor. The DOJ claims they're investigating these \$2.8 billion of insider trades. It's going to be the biggest cover-up we've ever seen. They're in on it as well.

But this is also a scandal involving one of the most corrupt, discredited reporters on the planet, Barak Ravid. And if you look at his Twitter timeline, his Twitter/X timeline, he's having a meltdown right now because he's finally been exposed. But it's also Jared Kushner, Steve Witkoff, and Donald Trump. And one other point I should mention, how you can easily dismiss any talk of Trump making a deal—well, Jared Kushner and Steve Witkoff, we know where their alliances lie. They're essentially Israeli assets, and the Iranian negotiating team knows that. The head of the National Security Committee for Iran's parliament just told our reporter at The Grayzone, Wyatt Reed, in an exclusive interview that the Iranians have no trust in Witkoff or Kushner for that reason.

And they've just added a new figure to their team, Nick Stewart, from the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, which is an Israeli cutout in Washington that has devised Trump's entire policy, including his naval blockade, Project Freedom. Nick Stewart, in comments that I published on a panel with Elliott Abrams—and another figure on the panel is the secretary for Crown Prince Reza Pahlavi—Nick Stewart said that he's opposed to any negotiations with Iran at all, including its reformist leadership, which is very inclined to make a deal with the U.S., because they're all part of a totalitarian regime that needs to be toppled.

#Judge Napolitano

Wait a minute. He's opposed to negotiations and he's a part of the Witkoff-Kushner negotiating team?

#Max

Jared Kushner just appointed Nick Stewart to advise Steve Witkoff on the Strait of Hormuz and these issues. That's the cover story. The real reason is to freeze out J.D. Vance and make sure that there will not be any deal, according to the objectives of Israel, which all of these figures serve. Again, the Foundation for Defense of Democracies is Israel's main think tank in Washington, and it has devised Trump's entire policy while freezing out any rational minds from the Trump administration.

#Judge Napolitano

Wow. Do you have two more minutes to talk to us about freedom of speech in the UK?

#Max

I got more than two minutes if you do. Yeah, I mean, there are two incidents in the UK, and I'll try to sum them up in two minutes that highlight...

#Judge Napolitano

I just meant that metaphorically. You can take as much time as you want, Max.

#Max

Okay. Yeah, I didn't know if you had another guest. There are two incidents in the UK that highlight how the rights of British citizens have been corroded to the point of no return by a completely sold-out and occupied political leadership, at least ostensibly led by PM Keir Starmer. The first is this unusual stabbing incident in which a demonstrably mentally ill man, who is a Muslim immigrant to the UK, reportedly stabbed two Jews—and I say reportedly because this is all the British media reported—in the Golders Green neighborhood of London, which is a Jewish-majority area of London. It was said to be this terrible anti-Semitic attack. It led to Keir Starmer delivering a national address in which he placed the blame firmly and solidly on pro-Palestine marches.

And those who march, he said, are complicit in this and must be criminalized and punished for stating phrases like "globalize the intifada," suggesting that he would apply 14 years in prison for anyone who said this. Not mentioned by Starmer—and buried by the Metropolitan Police—was that the same man, first of all, had nothing to do with the Palestine Solidarity Movement, and earlier in the day had stabbed a Muslim man who lived in his flat. And back in 2008, he had attacked police

officers. He was a subject of surveillance according to Britain's PREVENT program, which is a counter-radicalization program that obviously failed. So this supposed terror attack looks more like a random attack by a mentally ill man.

And then British media proceeded to blame that attack on Iran through a group that doesn't exist anywhere except on Telegram, called Ashab al-Yamin al-Islamiyah. It's a Telegram channel that takes credit for any attack in a Jewish area—even a car burglary in a Jewish area, arson, anything that happens—it takes credit and says, "We are part of the Iranian resistance." Who would be behind such a Telegram channel? Who would benefit from blaming all of these attacks on Iran? It would be, obviously, Israel. And as we have explained at The Grayzone through a print investigation authored by Wyatt Reed, it looks very clearly like an Israeli intelligence operation to take credit for these random attacks and blame it all on Iran.

And then you have, like, the British Telegraph, the Times of London, and now Keir Starmer himself echoing that blame and blaming Iran, claiming that these are ideologically motivated attacks in order to shut down whatever is left of the speech rights of British citizens, to shut down the Palestine Solidarity Movement on behalf of Israel because the British establishment is fearing a loss of control. The second incident is the case of the Filton Six, these activists from Palestine Action who were put on trial for attempting to shut down and occupy a factory belonging to the Israeli state-owned weapons company Elbit Systems.

It has these factories all across the UK, and Palestine Action, which is a direct-action anti-genocide group, has successfully shut down Elbit Systems factories that have been directly involved in the Gaza genocide and now the Iran war. And so this trial was a complete stitch-up, as we reported at The Grayzone, as we previously discussed. And the verdict came in—many of these defendants, of these six, I think four of the six, now face lengthy prison terms. One faces a prison term for grievous bodily harm. Yet the jury was not allowed to know in this case that the judge can sentence them for terrorism in order to proscribe this entire group as a terrorist group.

The defendants were not allowed to mention what the target of their activism was, which is Elbit Systems. They were not allowed to use the term "genocide" or discuss the situation in Gaza in court. And British citizens outside the court were arrested for holding signs advising jurors of their rights under a law that's actually enshrined in British law called jury equity—that they have the right to acquit a defendant based on their conscience. So you saw scores of British citizens holding signs advising jurors of their rights and being arrested outside the courtroom. That's how much Israel and Israeli influence in the UK has corroded and shredded the rights of British citizens in a country that doesn't have a First Amendment like we have.

And I should mention, this is kind of like breaking news—the judge in that trial, Judge Jeremy Johnson, who is a former barrister for MI6 and the Metropolitan Police, was just promoted hours after the verdict. It was very clear that the fix was in. And the reason why I think it's important to talk about this, Judge—I mean, on a program called Judging Freedom, where you're so concerned

with the constitutional rights of Americans—is if you look at the UK, that's where I think the part of our leadership that is bought and paid for by the Israel lobby, that's where they want to take our country. And all we have to stop them is the Constitution.

#Judge Napolitano

Well, this program today could be called The Grayzone on Judging Freedom because you have just been the Energizer Bunny with your articulate recitation of these incredible tales today that mainstream media doesn't want to cover at all. Max, thank you very much. Time does not permit me to go through the details of what you've talked about, but this audience is enormous and will grow exponentially because of your unbelievable grasp and brilliant articulation of all of these events. Thank you, my dear man. All the best. My best to your family as well. We'll look forward to seeing you again.

#Max

Thanks a lot, Judge. Thanks for giving me the time.

#Judge Napolitano

Sure. He really is unbelievable with his grasp of facts and his ability to articulate them in such a compelling way. Tomorrow, at the end of the week and at the end of the day, at four in the afternoon, with Larry Johnson and Ray McGovern—your Intelligence Community Roundtable. Judge Napolitano for Judging Freedom.